

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE TECHNICAL COMPETENCE

Annual Training Management Plan

The following strategies and success measures from the *DOE Strategic Plan* influence the training and development mission at ORO:

- Train individuals to appropriate and established levels of job competency and proficiency.
- Develop a workforce that is competent, accountable, and committed to health and safety.
- Ensure the safety and health of the workers and the public and the protection of the environment in all activities by ensuring that employees throughout ORO are appropriately trained and technically competent with their responsibilities and that a sufficient number of employees are trained in environment, safety, and health areas.

New Hires

The DOE Technical Qualification Program technical requirements are being incorporated into the position descriptions (as they are rewritten) in order that they may be considered when selecting candidates for hire. This ensures that job candidates are better qualified initially than they have been in the past. This, along with the individual development plan (IDP) requirement of a new IDP within 60 days (DOE O 360.1, Training) for employees entering a new position further ensures better qualified employees.

Individual Development Plan

DOE O 360.1, Training, requires managers/supervisors to “ensure that employees entering a new position have a new or revised individual development plan (IDP) within 60 days, and that individual development plans for all employees are reviewed and updated annually. ORO requires an IDP for all positions and is currently in the process of development of a tracking system for the IDPs.

Technical Qualification Program

The DOE Technical Qualification Program is the process used to objectively determine that individuals performing activities related to the technical management, oversight, or operation of defense nuclear facilities possess the knowledge, skills and abilities to perform their specific duties and responsibilities. The program applies to the 800 and 1300 series and others whose position requires them to provide management direction or oversight that could impact the safe operation of a defense nuclear facility.

The Department of Energy instituted the Technical Qualification Program in 1995 to document the skills and abilities of its technical professional employees. The program has a May of 1998 qualification deadline. ORO has surpassed the Secretary’s target of having 75% of technical professionals qualified by November 1997. To document the program, ORO TDD was part of the development of the TQP TRACKER software, designed to maintain and report on the status of the qualifications of employees on a continuing basis.

Facility Representative Program

A Facility Representative (FR) Program was established at ORO in 1995 to “ensure that facilities are operated safely and efficiently”. FRs represent DOE management and have day-to-day contact with the operating contractors of the facilities. A FR Qualification Manual was issued in June 96, to meet the intent of the DOE TQP for DNFSB 93-3 and DOE Standard 1063-93. The requirements stated that “a FR shall be qualified by education, experience, and/or training...” and “...should possess a broad technical knowledge in a variety of disciplines ...and be able to demonstrate an understanding...of their facilities.” There are 25 ORO Facility Representatives and 23 are fully qualified as of December 1997. The remaining 2 are in the process of qualification and are late entries into the FR Program.

Y-12 Site Office and Y-12 Facility Representatives

The Y-12 Site Office (YSO) technical qualification and FR programs have developed significantly over the past three years. During the September 1995 Readiness Assessment (RA) for the restart of Receipt Storage and Shipment (RSS) at the Y-12 site, shortcomings were identified with YSO staffing, technical oversight personnel and the qualification program for FR's. During the March 1996 RA for Disassembly and Assembly activities at the Y-12 site, the independent DOE assessment team reported that: “The assigned FR's are very competent people with exceptional experience and background for these assignments.” It was also noted during this March 1996 assessment that the DOE Y-12 Site Office has the required staffing and technical expertise to oversee the environmental, safety and health programs associated with the operation of this site. In October of 1997 the DNFSB conducted a Training and Qualification program review of the DOE YSO and DOE ORO federal personnel. The board noted that: “ We continued to be impressed with cadre of FR's assigned to Y-12”.

High Flux Isotope Reactor, ORNL Site Office and Facility Representatives

The High Flux Isotope Reactor (HFIR) has 3 full time, qualified FR's assigned to oversee operation of the facility. ORNL has 2 full time, qualified FR's with 2 additional FR's assigned to oversee Environmental Management (EM) facilities located at ORNL. ORNL site office personnel assigned to the Technical Qualification Program (TQP) are approximately 99% complete.

East Tennessee Technology Park Site Office and Facility Representatives

East Tennessee Technology Park (ETTP) has 6 FR's assigned to the site. 2 of these FR's have only recently entered the FR program and are not qualified. ETTP site Office personnel assigned to the TQP are 88% complete.

College Degrees

There are currently 167 participants in the TQP and 132 hold degrees of Bachelor or higher. The breakdown is 73 Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degrees and 1 B.S. degree in progress, 43 Master of Science (M.S.) degrees, 7 Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degrees and 8 non-technical degrees. A total of 76.6% of the TQP participants hold degrees.

Oversight of Contractor Training

The Training and Development Division supports line organization reviews and assessments of management and operating (M&O) contractor training programs, including evaluating contractor

compliance with DOE order requirements related to training, procedures, and conduct of operations. TDD interfaces periodically with each of the sites via weekly phone calls, monthly meetings, and quarterly Contractor Oversight Working Group meetings which are chaired by TDD.

Summary

Through a competent line organization, ORO is re-assured that incidents such as the Hanford explosion will not occur here. The competence is assured because experts have identified the performance requirements for the technical positions (Position and Qualification Standards), incumbents and supervisors have matched individuals' education, experience, and training to those performance requirements and generated plans to fill the gaps identified (IDPs and Technical Qualification Records). Those plans were then implemented with auditable documentation (TQP TRACKER).